

Blackjack Monthly

March Edition



A few days ago, I had the honor to show LTC Hess from 325 BSB, stationed at Hawaii our operations. I showed him each shop section and my command post. Each section clearly talked him thru several lessons learned, pointed out things to train on, systems we use, and issues we face. He walked away impressed with what we have accomplished so far and with about six weeks worth of reading material. His Battalion may be the one who replaces us, allowing Blackjack to redeploy to you at home. He now has a better understanding of what he will get into and can prepare his Soldiers for their upcoming deployment. What does that mean for you? It means we are still here until we get on a plane, so don't make those big vacation plans just yet. This also does not mean we will come home early. I seriously doubt we will come home early, so please don't even entertain the thought. We still have a lot of work to do, but the light is at the end of the tunnel and it is not a train coming the other way. We still need your love and support from home. Although we may have reached a half way point, we still have another half to go. Thankfully, it has gone by fast. I pray the second half will go by even faster. I ask all to keep your head up and please keep those letters and packages coming. They mean a lot to all of us over here.

I again have to thank the city of Las Vegas for their generosity. In case you didn't know, they will host all of Blackjack and family to a welcome home celebration "Vegas Style." I don't exactly know what that means, but it has to be good. CW2 Robert Roberts went there for R&R and had a great time. He watched 2 Vegas shows, a hockey game, played a round of golf at one of their pristine courses, and renewed his wedding vows at the same chapel he got married in 10 years ago. The story about his vow renewal was such a great story it was on the news. You can see it at:

http://www.kvbc.com/Global/story.asp?S=4644042&nav=menu107_2

We all have a lot to be thankful for and making progress everyday to make our and the Iraqi nation better places. No matter what you see on the news, I can tell you from personal experience it is getting better. May god continue to bless our nation, and our fine Soldiers.

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From the 1SG

According to the calendar most of us have been here for 187 days or so. Some a little more and some a little less. B Company has done a lot in those six months. We have completed over 1300 jobs and 145 recovery missions. We have driven over 14,000 total miles in support of the Kirkuk Area of Operation (AO Bastogne). 20 Soldiers have been promoted and 18 have re-enlisted for a total of \$300,000 tax free. 55 Soldiers have already been on R&R leave with six choosing Vegas as their R&R destination so far. At least six Soldiers have completed one college course. Seven Babies have been born to Blackjack Soldiers and spouses since we have deployed with five babies still on the way with a bunch more due around June 07, I'm sure. Two of our Soldiers have returned to Ft Campbell do to medical related conditions and are truly missed. Three other Blackjack Soldiers have been moved to Battalion for bigger and better things. That being said we look to what the future brings us.

The Soldiers of B Company have achieved so much in such a short period of time it is hard to believe the world's largest game of "Survivor" is going on here. The close quarter living is getting old quick and the novelty of being in a combat zone wore off sometime last month. As busy as they are the biggest challenge facing them today is the mundaneness in everyday operations. It doesn't matter how busy you are when you do the same thing day after day, night after night and then go home to the same people every single day. Some Soldiers would lose focus and let work get sloppy or really start worrying about what is going on at the home front but our Soldiers have accepted the challenge and are meeting it head on. Today the SPC and below are having a sports day/BBQ to relieve the daily stress. Our Company has started the first round of the "Texas Hold'em" tournament with the eventual winner going to Vegas with a friend. Our basketball team is doing very well with a record of 6-2 and flag football season is just around the corner.

Daylight Savings begins at 0200 on April 1st here in Iraq so we will be springing forward then. I actually look forward to it because I know we will not be here when daylight savings goes away this fall. Thank you for doing what you do, it allows us to take excellent care of your Soldiers when they don't have to worry unnecessarily about what is going on back at Ft Campbell. The rumors have been few and I like it that way. Special thanks go out again to Kayla McCormick for handling the FRG business even though her husband is attached to a MiTT team and we are lucky if we see him once a month or so. I look forward to getting off the plane and greeting each and every one of our Blackjack families with a warm smile and a hug of thanks.

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